

Getty Tomb
Graceland Cemetery
North Clark Street and West
Irving Park Road
Chicago
Cook County
Illinois

HABS No. ILL-1045

HABS
ILL,
16-CHIG,
47-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Washington Planning and Service Center
1730 North Lynn Street
Arlington, Virginia

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. ILL-1045

GETTY TOMB

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16-CHIG,

47-

Location: Graceland Cemetery; North Clark Street and West Irving Park Road; Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.

Present Owner
and Use: Getty Family Mausoleum.

Statement of
Significance: One of Louis Sullivan's most delicate and decorative designs, the Getty Tomb is one of three mausoleum structures created by the firm of Adler and Sullivan between 1889 and 1892.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Legal description of the property: The Graceland Cemetery is located in Inglehart's Subdivision of the West one-half of the southeast one-quarter of Section 17-40-14. Recorded April 25, 1855. It is bounded on the north by West Montrose Avenue, on the south by West Irving Park Road, on the east by North Seminary Street, and on the west by North Clark Street. The main entrance to the grounds is North Clark Street and West Irving Park Road. The Getty tomb is located at the north end of the cemetery, near West Montrose Avenue, and occupies a small triangle created by the intersection of three small roads. Opposite it, diagonally across a pond is the Ryerson Tomb, designed in 1889.

The history of ownership of the cemetery land parcels is not recorded in the books of the County Recorder's Office.

2. Date of erection: 1890.
3. Architect: Adler and Sullivan; designed by Louis H. Sullivan.
4. Notes on original plan and construction of building: Although the city of Chicago requires a building permit for a mausoleum, there is no record of an original permit for the Getty tomb.

Morrison, Hugh. Louis Sullivan, Prophet of Modern Architecture. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1935, pp. 128-129:

"The Getty Tomb (pls. 39, 40), near the Ryerson Tomb in Graceland Cemetery, was built as a monument to Carrie Eliza

Getty in 1890. It is appropriately more graceful and feminine than the Ryerson Tomb, and enriched with delicately carved decoration. The construction is of blocks of grey Bedford limestone, with bronze gates and inner door. The rectangular block of the monument rests on a stylobate of four single stones, and the lower half of the wall is of smooth ashlar masonry. The upper half of the wall has an over-all incised pattern of octagonal panels enclosing eight-pointed stars, and above this is an enriched cornice with three scallops constituting the roof. On the front and two sides are large arches springing from the ashlar base to cover the door and the side lunettes. The wedge-shaped voussoirs extend through the whole depth of these arches, but the faces are incised with four bands and lines of ornament alternating with plain surfaces. This treatment recalls Richardson's entrances to the Austin Law School at Harvard, but is flatter and more delicate. The outer gates and the entrance door have superb designs, one in pierced bronze and the other in low relief."

Connely, Willard. Louis Sullivan as He Lived. New York: Horizon Press, Inc., 1960, pp. 127-128:

"This majestic work [The Ryerson Tomb], when finished, quickly brought a commission for another memorial, but to a woman, Mrs. Eliza Getty. (The Getty family-plot chanced to be very near the grave of Patrick Sullivan.) In this case the architect drew a cubical monument in gray limestone with arches in the front and in the sides, smooth walls up to the base of the arching, and the upper half of the walls filled with small octagons enclosing stars. A banded roof slightly overhung. The folding doors were in pierced bronze, intricately wrought in Sullivan's original manner, while above their arch swept three semicircular bands, foliated, and alternating with plain surfaces. All of the ornament he himself drew, in its full size. The dignity and grace of this tomb, it was generally granted, were bound to immortalize both designer and deceased. Frank Lloyd Wright called the Getty Monument 'entirely Sullivan's own, a piece of sculpture, a statue, a great poem'."

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with Building:

The tomb is a monument to the deceased wife of Henry Harrison Getty, a prominent Chicago businessman. Getty probably secured Sullivan's services in view of the former's business contacts with Martin Ryerson, a frequent client of Adler and Sullivan. Below is a biographical sketch of Getty from the Book of Chicagoans (1905), p. 231:

"Getty, Henry Harrison, capitalist; Batavia, N.Y., 1836; s. Adams Getty; removed with parents in 1848 to Waukegan,

Ill.; ed. public schools of Batavia, N.Y., and Waukegan, Ill.; m. 1864, Carrie E. Anderson, of Muskegon, Mich.; 1 daughter. On leaving school in 1856, went to Muskegon, Michigan, and was engaged in general store, 1856-9; entered employ of Ryerson and Morris, saw-mills, Muskegon, 1879, and soon became supt. and foreman of the mill; bought interest in firm, 1865, which became Ryerson, Hills & Co.; in 1867 bought an interest in the Chicago business of Martin Ryerson & Co., and removed to this city to take charge of the yards; retired from business in 1892. Clubs: Chicago, Union League. Office: 204 Dearborn St."

The design for the Getty Tomb received much praise from abroad. In 1900, at a time when Sullivan's commissions were very few, a plaster cast of the tomb doorway was being shown at the Paris Exposition.

"A young travelling scholar from the Chicago Architectural Club, Max Dunning, stood talking with M. Pascal of the Beaux Arts. 'I consider,' said Pascal, 'that Louis Sullivan has in his work exemplified better the essence of the teaching of the Beaux Arts than any other American.'" Willard Connely, Louis Sullivan as He Lived (New York: Horizon Press, Inc., 1960), p. 215/.

The Getty Tomb is located in an area of the Graceland Cemetery that contains the graves and imposing monuments erected to many of Chicago's prominent early families, such as the Palmers, Pullmans, Ryersons, McCormicks, etc. It is also the burial place of John Root and Daniel Burnham. On April 15, 1924, Louis Sullivan was also laid to rest in Graceland, alongside his parents, a short distance away from the Getty Tomb Ibid., p. 305/.

C. Bibliography:

Bush-Brown, Albert. Louis Sullivan. New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1960. Pp. 20,21, photographs 29-32.

Connely, Willard. Louis Sullivan as He Lived. New York: Horizon Press, Inc., 1960. Pp. 127-8, 133, 149, 159, 215, 304-5, Pls. 23, 24.

"How the Rich are Buried," Architectural Record 10:36-37 (July, 1900).

Picture article containing two photographs.

Information card in Burnham Library: "Plaster cast of the doors given to Art Institute by Mr. L.H. Sullivan, architect after they were returned from an exhibition in France at which an award was made to Mr. Sullivan for their design. In 1949 the cast was destroyed."

Leonard, John W. (ed.) The Book of Chicagoans. Chicago:
A.N. Marquis and Co., 1905. P. 231.

Moore, Jill. "The Tragic Hero of Modern Architecture,"
Chicago, V. 1, No. 11 (January, 1955). Pp. 26-31, Illus.
Photograph.

Morrison, Hugh. Louis Sullivan, Prophet of Modern Architecture.
New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1935. Pp. 128-129, 300,
pls. 39, 40.

Szarkowski, John. The Idea of Louis Sullivan. Minneapolis:
The University of Minnesota Press, 1956. Pp. 129-133.
Photographs.

Prepared by Larry J. Homolka
Historian
National Park Service
J. William Rudd
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
September, 1964

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: A Mausoleum by Adler and Sullivan significant in its decorative handling of limestone and copper (see entrance gate details).
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Layout and shape: Rectangular.
2. Foundation: Limestone.
3. Wall construction, finish, color: Light grey limestone.
4. Structural system, framing: Limestone. Bearing walls.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Entrance doors on east are bronze in high relief with outer bronze gates developed in a highly decorative and pierced bronze detail.

- b. Windows: Lunette windows in the center of both the north and south walls.

6. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Running north and south are three limestone segments, each with a slight depression.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Projecting limestone cornice.

C. Technical Description of Interior:

The interior of the tomb is not open to the public. Therefore, details of the internment chambers are undetermined.

D. Site:

- 1. General setting and orientation: The structure faces east on a small triangle of land bounded by cemetery roads. It is the only structure on a plot, located in the northwest part of the cemetery.
- 2. Landscaping: There are green trees and grass on the entire plot.

Prepared by J. William Rudd
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
September, 1964

ADDENDUM TO:
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FIELD RECORDS

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National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
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Washington, DC 20240-0001